"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—CHRIST.

The Christian Freeman.

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THE LAST HOURS OF DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

"YOU will see in this my notion of good works, that I am far from expecting to merit heaven by them. By heaven we understand a state of happiness, infinite in degree and eternal in duration. I can do nothing to deserve such a reward. He that for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands compared with those who think they deserve heaven for the little good they do on earth. For my part, I have not the vanity to think I deserve it, the folly to expect it, or the ambition to desire it, but content myself in submitting myself to the disposal of that God who made me, who has hitherto preserved and blessed me, and in whose fatherly goodness I may well confide, that he will never make me miserable, and that the affliction I may at any time suffer may tend to my benefit." It has often been charged against Franklin that he was an infidel, just as the charge is repeated now against Unitarians in general. The above words were his reply to the Rev. George Whitefield, who had written to him on hoping to merit heaven through good works, and they are the reply of every Unitarian to this insinuation.

It is true that Dr. Franklin was not nominally a member of any Christian Church, but who among us can doubt the religious character of the man who called the attention of the House of Congress to the duty of prayer, and who was known by his friends to practise private devotion. Of the Christian religion, his daughter, at whose house he died, says :—"He thought no system in the Christian world was so well calculated to promote the interests of society as the doctrine which showed a God reconciling a lost world unto himself." Just five weeks before his death he distinctly avowed his religious faith in the *oneness* of God and the subordination of Jesus Christ, saying his views were "similar to the dissenters of England," the Unitarians, for he was a worshipper at Essex-street Chapel when in London, and a personal friend of Priestley and Lindsey. Franklin has been justly pronounced by the most eminent of statesmen, philosophers, and *literati* one of the greatest men and benefactors of our race; and many of his productions contain a deep religious sentiment, and breathe forth the very spirit and genius of Christianity. His death-bed was easy and placid, resigned, hopeful, and devout. The last public act of his life was in favour of the freedom of the slave. He said, "for my own personal ease I should have died two years ago, but though these years have been spent in *excruciating* pain, I am pleased that I have lived them." In the intervals of pain he was cheerful and ready to amuse his friends or do any good. He spoke of the blessings he had received from God, and said he was afraid he did not bear his pain as he ought, "for no doubt my suffering is to wean me from a world in which I am no longer fit to act my part." His conversation with his family before he died, upon the subject of his dissolution, was free and cheerful. His daughter told him, as she made his bed for the last time, she hoped he would recover and live many years longer. He calmly replied, "*I hope not.*" He had no desire for any of the ceremonies of religion at his bedside; but his friends who surrounded him felt, from his "*sublime strains of pious conversation,*" the religion of God was in his heart. Till the very last he was

grateful and patient, with a humble trust in Almighty mercy and closed his eyes on the 17th of April, 1790, in the 85th year of his age.

SPEAK GENTLY.

"I AM entirely at a loss to know what to do with that boy," said Mrs. Burton to her husband, with much concern on her face, and in an anxious tone of voice.

While Mrs. Burton was speaking a bright, active boy, eight years of age, came dashing into the room, and, without heeding any one, commenced beating with two large sticks against one of the window sills, and making a deafening noise.

"Incorrigible boy!" exclaimed his mother, going quickly up to him, and jerking the stick out of his hand, "can I not teach you either manners or decency?"

The boy became sulky in an instant, and stood where he was, pouting sadly.

"I declare I am out of all heart!" she exclaimed sinking down upon a chair. "It is line upon line, and precept upon precept, but all to no good purpose. That boy will break my heart yet!"

Mr. Burton said nothing, but he saw plainly enough that it was not all the child's fault. He doubted the use of speaking out and saying this unequivocally, although he had often and often been on the point of doing so involuntarily. He knew the temper of his wife so well, and her peculiar sensitiveness about everything that looked like charging any fault upon herself, that he feared more harm than good would result from an attempt on his part to show her that she was much more than half to blame for the boy's perverseness of temper.

Once or twice the little fellow showed himself at the door, but was driven back with harsh words until the hour for tea arrived. The sound of the tea bell caused an instant oblivion of all the disagreeable impressions made on his mind. His little feet answered the welcome summons with a clatter that stunned the ears of his mother.

"Go back, sir!" she said, sternly, as he burst open the dining-room door, and sent it swinging with a loud concussion against the wall, "and see if you cannot walk down stairs more like a boy than a horse."

Master Henry withdrew, pouting out his rosy lips to the distance of nearly an inch. He went up one flight of stairs, and then returned.

Harry settled himself down to the table as quietly as his mercurial spirits would let him, and tried to wait until he was helped; but in spite of all his efforts to do so, his hand went over into the bread-basket. A look from his mother caused him to drop the slice he had raised; it was not a look in which there was much affection. While waiting to be helped his hands were busy with his knife and fork, making a most unpleasant clatter.

"Put down your hands!" harshly spoken, remedied this evil, or rather sent the active movement from the little fellow's hands to his feet, that commenced a swinging motion, his heels striking noisily against the chair.

"Keep your feet still!" caused this to cease.

After one or two more reproofs, the boy was left to himself. As soon as he received his cup of tea he poured the entire contents into his saucer, and then tried to lift it steadily to his lips. In doing so he spilled one-third of the contents upon the table-cloth.

A box on the ears and a storm of angry words rewarded this feat.

"Have I not told you over and over again, you incorrigible bad boy, not to pour the whole of your tea into your saucer? Just see what a mess you have made with that clean table cloth! I declare I am out of all patience with you! Go away from the table this instant!"

A scene somewhat similar to this was enacted at every meal; but instead of improving in his behaviour, the boy grew more heedless. Mr. Burton rarely said anything to Harry about his unruly manner, but, when he did, a word was enough. That word was always mildly yet firmly spoken. He did not think him a bad boy or difficult to manage—at least he had never found him so. "I wish I knew what to do with that child," said Mrs. Burton, after the little fellow had been sent to bed an hour before his time, in consequence of some violation of law and order, "he makes me constantly feel un-

happy. I dislike to be scolding him for ever, but what can I do? If I did not curb him in some way there would be no living in the house with him. I am afraid he will cause us a great deal of trouble."

Mr. Burton sat silent. He wanted to say a word on the subject, but he feared that its effects might not be what he desired.

"I wish you would advise me what to do, Mr. Burton," said his wife, a little petulantly. "You sit and do not say a single word, as if you had no kind of interest in the matter. What am I to do? I have exhausted all my own resources and feel completely at a loss."

"There is a way which, if you would adopt it, I think might do good." Mr. Burton spoke with a slight appearance of hesitation. "If you would speak gently to Harry I am sure you would be able to manage him far better than you do."

Mrs. Burton's face was crimsoned in an instant; she felt the reproof deeply; her self-esteem was severely wounded.

"Speak gently, indeed!" she replied, "I might as well speak to the wind; I am scarcely heard at the top of my voice."

As her husband did not argue the matter with her, nor say anything that was calculated to keep up the excitement under which she was labouring, her feelings in a little while quieted down, and her thoughts became active. The words, "speak gently," were constantly in her mind, and there was a reproving import in them. On going to bed that night she could not get to sleep for several hours; her mind was too busily engaged in reviewing her conduct towards her child. She clearly perceived that she had too frequently suffered her mind to get excited and angry, and that she was often annoyed at trifles which ought to have been overlooked.

"I am afraid I have been unjust to my child," she sighed over and over again, turning restlessly upon her pillow.

"I will try and do better," she said to herself as she rose in the morning, feeling but little refreshed from sleep. Before she was ready to leave her room she heard Harry's voice calling her from the next chamber, where he slept. The tones were fretful; he wanted some attendance, and was crying out for it in a manner that instantly disturbed the even surface of the mother's feelings. She was about telling him, angrily, to be quiet until she could finish dressing herself, when the words "speak gently," seemed whispered in her ear. The effect was magical; the mother's spirit was subdued.

"I will speak gently," she murmured, and went in to Harry, who was still crying out fretfully.

"What do you want, my son," she said in a quiet, kind voice.

The boy looked up with surprise; his eye brightened, and the whole expression of his face was changed in an instant.

"I cannot find my stockings, mamma," he said.

"There they are, under the bureau," returned Mrs. Burton, as gently as she had at first spoken.

"Oh yes, so they are!" cheerfully replied Harry; "I could not see them any where."

"Did you think crying would bring them?"

This was said with a smile, and in a tone so unlike his mother that the child looked up again into her face with surprise that was, Mrs. Burton plainly saw, mingled with pleasure.

"Do you want anything else?" she asked.

"No, mamma," he replied cheerfully; "I can dress myself now."

This first little effort was crowned with the most encouraging results to the mother; she felt a deep peace settling in her bosom, the consciousness of having gained a true victory over the perverse tendencies of both her own heart and that of her boy. It was a little act, but it was the first fruits, and the gathering even of so small a harvest was sweet to her spirit.

For the first time in many months the breakfast table was pleasant to all. Harry never once interrupted the conversation that passed at intervals between his father and mother. When he asked for anything it was in a way that was pleasing to all. Once or twice Mrs. Burton found it necessary to correct some little fault in manner, but the way in which she did it did not in the least disturb her child's temper, and instead of not seeming to hear her words,

as had almost always been the case, he regarded all that was said, and tried to do as she wished.

"There is a wonderful power in gentle words," remarked Mr. Burton to his wife, after Harry had left the table.

"Yes, wonderful indeed; their effect surprises me."

"Love is strong."

Days, weeks, months, and years went by; during all this time the mother continued to strive very earnestly with herself, and very kindly with her child. The happiest results followed; the fretful, passionate, disorderly boy became even-minded and orderly in his habits. A word, gently spoken, was all-powerful in its influence for good, but the least shade of harshness would arouse his stubborn will and deform his fair young face.

Whenever mothers complain to Mrs. Burton of the difficulty they find in managing their children, she has one piece of advice to give, and that is, "Command yourself, and 'speak gently.'"

THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.

During the present month much attention will be directed to "Parliamentary Reform," so a few words on the history of the House of Commons may not be out of place in our pages.

The English Parliament is but a continuation of the old "Wittenagemote" of the Saxon, and which, before it was known here, was in use in most of the northern countries of Europe.

The "Wittenagemote," or the assembly of wise men, was the great council by which the Anglo-Saxon kings were guided in all the main acts of government. It was composed of prelates and abbots, of the aldermen of shires, and, as it is generally expressed, of the noble and wise men of the kingdom; but who these were is not clearly defined, probably all the large proprietors of land would be entitled to sit in this council. How often the meetings of the Wittenagemote were held, or under what regulations, is not known with any certainty, but it is considered that they would meet yearly, much as our present Parliament does, and the condition of the country and the very limited means of locomotion would prevent any more frequent meetings except on some very special occasion; there are records of its having met in times previous to the Heptarchy, and King Alfred is said to have ordered it to meet twice a year; how elections were conducted, and who had the right of choosing the representatives in those early days, is not known with any certainty.

King John by the great charter engaged to summon all archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, and greater barons personally, and all other by sheriffs and bailiffs. The earliest writs, of which many are preserved, are for the Parliament of 1266, under Henry III., and we may consider that Parliaments have been regularly summoned from that date in that form till now.

Parliament is summoned by the king's writ only, and this was originally issued to the sheriff of each county, and to the mayor or bailiff of the most important towns and cities in the kingdom, but which these should be was in the discretion of the king, and many places would send representatives to several successive Parliaments, and then writs would cease to be sent, and after an interval would be resumed again. Some towns have petitioned the king praying to be relieved from the burden of sending representatives; the little town of Brading had for many years sent representatives, but the inhabitants prayed to be relieved, and the writ was withdrawn and never again issued.

It is generally supposed that the Grand Council or Parliament was originally but one assembly sitting together and deliberating as one, until some time after the Norman Conquest.

The Crown is pledged to call Parliament together at least once in every year, and at any place the Crown may please; in ancient times the place of meeting was varied; Parliament often met at Oxford; Winchester and other places have sometimes been chosen, but now, for some generations past, it has invariably met at Westminster. The last occasion of its meeting elsewhere was at the time of the great plague in 1665. As before mentioned, Parliament has no power until set in motion by the Crown, but there were two occasions when Parliament assembled

without the intervention of the Crown, that in 1660, which called Charles II. to the throne, and that in 1688, after the flight of James II., when Parliament declared the throne to be vacant, and invited William III.

The Houses (and especially the Commons) have at all times been very jealous of their rights and privileges. If the correctness of any election is called in question, the House of Commons is the sole judge, and delegates to a committee of its own members the inquiry into the matter in dispute, and from their decision there is no appeal.

One very celebrated case was that of John Wilkes, who was expelled the House of Commons for being the author of a seditious libel; in the next Parliament (1769) he was again expelled for another libel, and a new writ issued for Middlesex, and he was re-elected without a contest. The House declared the election void, and a new writ issued; again Wilkes was elected, and again the election was declared void. A new election was taken, and this time a Col. Luttrell opposed Wilkes, but Wilkes was chosen by a large majority, yet the House decided that Wilkes was disqualified, and therefore Luttrell was the representative, and the return was so amended; this proceeding of the House excited much comment, and was condemned by many, and at length in 1782, thirteen years afterwards, the resolution of the House declaring Wilkes to be disqualified was ordered to be expunged from the journals as "subversive of the rights of the whole body of electors of the kingdom."

In ancient days it was customary for each constituency to pay to its member an allowance, which in the time of Edward III. was fixed at 4s. per day for county members, and 2s. per day for borough members, increased from time to time as the value of money increased; but at last it became usual to choose representatives from a more wealthy class who declined to take the allowance, and the last member who received regular pay from his constituents was Andrew Marvell, the member for Hull, in the time of Charles II. To insure, as it was thought, that the members should be independent men, it was afterwards provided that each county member should possess an income from land of £600 per year, and every borough member £300; but these restrictions became at last a dead letter, and only occasioned much trouble and a great deal of false representation, and it was no unusual thing for a commercial or professional man with an income of twenty times the amount required, but none of it from land, to borrow temporarily the title deeds of property sufficient to qualify. During the present reign the property qualification has been repealed, and the constituencies are free in their choice with some few exceptions.

The power of Parliament has always been acknowledged, and English history has no record of any laws enacted, or of alterations in any laws, without the consent of Parliament. In early days the kings did indeed levy taxes at various times, and which were submitted to, but their right to do so was never acknowledged, and by degrees we arrived at our present position, when no taxes can be levied, nor any money spent, but by the authority of the House of Commons, the Peers having no right to interfere in any question of money.

In the more ancient times a Parliament was elected each year as it was required to meet; but about the time of the Stuarts the House of Commons often continued in being for many years. At the revolution of 1688 it was provided that no House of Commons should sit longer than three years, but this period was extended in the first year of George I., and the present period of seven years was fixed, but it has been customary to dissolve the House at the end of six years.

In the time of the Edwards our House of Commons was a sturdy independent body. It greatly degenerated during the wars of the Roses, but afterwards, as the Puritan party rose up and gained strength, and the House regained some of its old character after the Restoration, aristocracy and wealth began to exercise greater influence in elections, and for many years after the commencement of the last century the House of Commons was a mass of corruption.

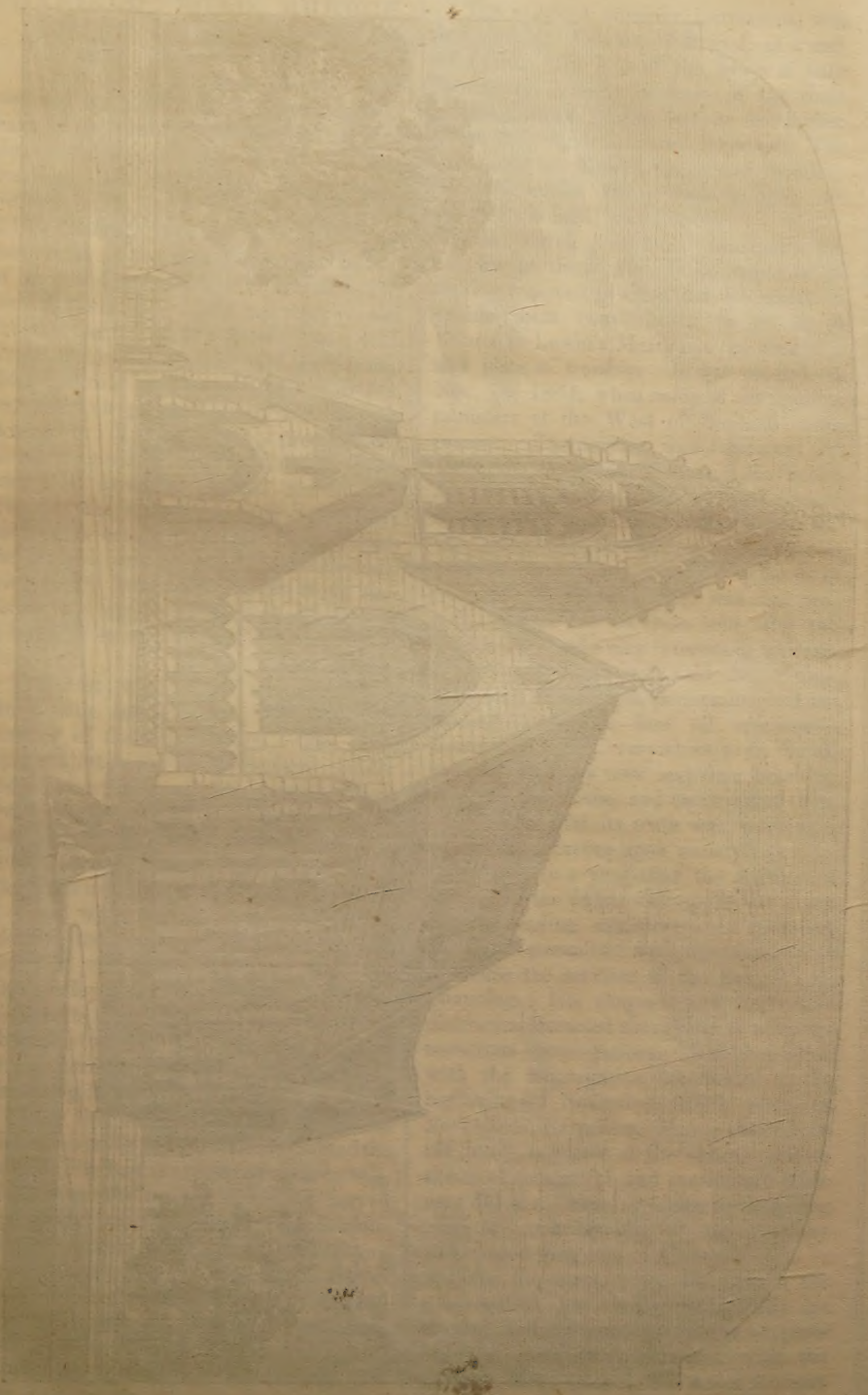
So far as can be traced it would appear that in the earliest times every owner of land voted in each county; and in the borough elections previous to the time of

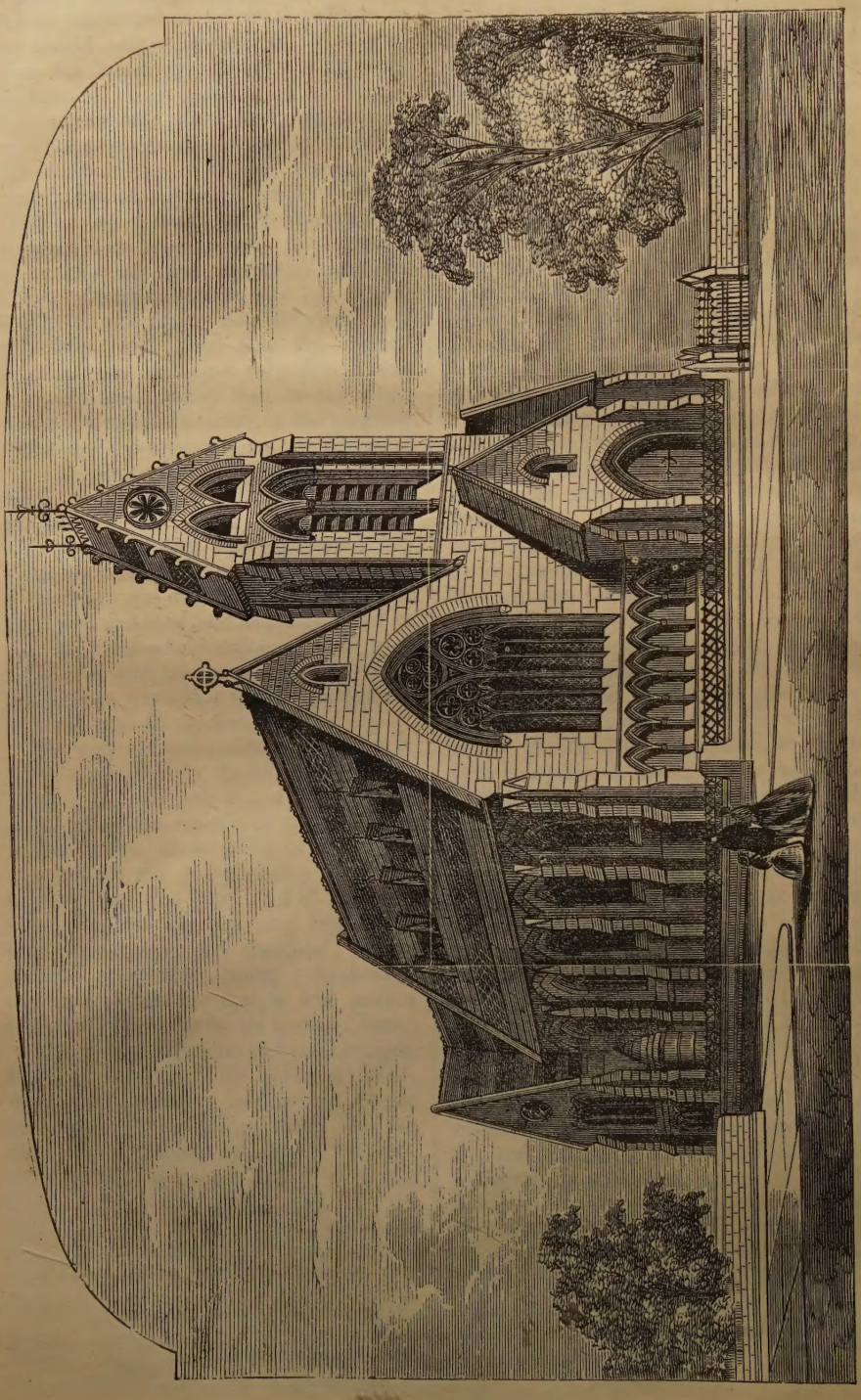
Henry VI. *all* people voted; but this must not be considered as universal suffrage as we should *now* understand it, for at that time the labouring population were many of them still in a condition of villeinage; and others only then emerging from it would scarcely be considered as a part of the *people* at all, and by the "people" was probably meant all the "freemen" of the town or city. As municipal charters were renewed from time to time the franchise in some cases was restricted, and the choice of representatives was left in the hands of the mayor and aldermen, and sometimes with them and the council jointly, while in some very few it was extended more widely than in any other, and there were two towns in the kingdom where the franchise was in the hands of "every man who boiled his pot," which made it thoroughly universal in those particular towns; these were the "pot-wollopers" as they were contemptuously called by others. In a few other instances the suffrage was held by every man "who paid scot and bore lot," and this would be complete "household suffrage;" these were called scot and lot voters. In all others the suffrage was either in the hands of the corporation or of the freemen.

The rights of non-resident freemen were entirely abolished by the bill of 1832, all existing freemen and their children being still kept on the register of voters if they resided within seven miles of the town. The Reform Act provided that all householders living in a house of £10 a year in any borough or city returning representatives should have the franchise; in the counties every man owning a freehold of the value of 40s. per year, or who paid a rent of £50 per year for his house or land.

The question of Reform gathered strength, but very slowly until the peace of 1814, when it took stronger hold on the people generally; Mr. Charles Grey, in the House of Commons, taking a very conspicuous part, and being looked on as the leader. Sir F. Burdett, both in the House and out of it, was an influential partisan; a little later came Henry Brougham and Lord John Russell, and it is amusing to read the report of Lord John's annual motion that the corrupt borough of East Retford be disfranchised and its members given to Birmingham.

On the 1st March, 1831, Lord John brought into the House of Commons the Reform Bill, which was more complete and thorough than the most sanguine reformers had anticipated, and excited great enthusiasm all through the country, and alarm and consternation amongst the Tory party. It would take too long to do more than just sketch the progress of the bill; on April 18th the Ministry were defeated, and immediately the House was dissolved and a new one summoned, which met in June; on the 24th a new bill was brought in, and after much opposition it passed through on 21st September, and was carried to the Lords, who, after a sitting of sixteen hours and a-half, refused the second reading at half-past six o'clock on Saturday morning. Parliament was then, on the 20th October, prorogued, and the excitement throughout the country was intense. On December 6th the Parliament met again; a third bill was introduced, again opposed, and did not pass through the Commons till 22nd March. The bill went to the Upper House, and was read, after a long debate, a second time by a majority of nine. On 7th May a motion of Lord Lyndhurst's was carried against the Government. Lord Grey asked of the king permission to create such a number of new peers as would be sufficient to insure the passing of the bill; this the king declined to give, and on the 9th May the ministry resigned, and then ensued eight days of such alarm and excitement as this country has seldom seen; at Birmingham 100,000 men met and agreed to march up to London to tell the king and the peers their mind; the most violent and inflammatory language was used at public meetings all over the country. Meantime the Duke of Wellington had undertaken to form a ministry, but found it altogether impossible, and consequently Earl Grey was again sent for, and the king gave him authority to do whatever he considered necessary. This being well understood, the peers made no further serious opposition, and the bill passed the House of Lords on 5th June, 1832, after fifteen months of turmoil and excitement, and the Tory party went back to their homes fully convinced that the country was ruined.





OAKFIELD ROAD CHURCH, CLIFTON, BRISTOL.

OAKFIELD ROAD CHURCH, CLIFTON, BRISTOL.

THIS is one of the most elegant of our recently built churches. It consists of nave, aisle, chancel, organ chamber, and singers' gallery, and minister's and deacons' vestries. The nave is 72ft. by 28ft., and 50ft. to under side of roof; aisle, 72ft. by 13ft.; chancel, 19ft. by 21ft. The arrangement of the church is similar to that of an ordinary Church of England. The style is that of the fourteenth century, and the materials used are native stone, with freestone dressings. The nave is separated from the aisle by an arcade of five arches, supported on polished granite shafts from Aberdeen. The church is at present fitted to accommodate 400 persons, but can easily be arranged to hold more. The whole of the seats are formed on the most modern principle, with cut bench-ends; the chancel seats have carved bench-ends, with poppy heads—the whole being furnished with cushions. The chancel, which is large, is used for the Communion service.

The east window in the chancel is fitted with stained glass, given by a member of the congregation. The principal subject is the Lord's Supper. Under the window is a reredos, formed of an arcade supported on marble shafts, the spandrils being inlaid with marble. It is intended to fill the niches with statues. The portion of the reredos under the arcade is lined with diaper in Minton's tiles, coloured red and black. The compartments of the arcade are filled with the "beatitudes." The chancel arch is formed with shafts of polished Devonshire marble. The relieving arch of the chancel is inlaid with patterns formed by carving the stone and filling it with black cement.

Under the windows is a course of tiles with a flowering pattern running around the church. The roof is supported upon corbels, with Devonshire marble shafts and carved capitals and bases, and between the spandrils are panels filled in with Devonshire marble. The pulpit is placed on one side of the chancel arch, and is circular in form, and supported upon six shafts of Devonshire and Purbeck marble. It has five figures in niches, representing the Saviour and four Evangelists.

The organ, a superior instrument, was built by Mr. Vowles, of Bristol, at a cost of £400. The finis of the tower is only temporary, it being the desire of the committee to raise it some thirty feet higher when their funds are more abundant. The architects are Messrs. Popes and Brindon, and the entire cost of the building, including the land, was £6000.

The church was built principally for the use of those who, in consequence of having removed to distances too great to enable them conveniently to go in to Bristol to Lewin's Mead, felt the need of a new place of worship. It was opened on Nov. 10, 1864, when many of the leading ministers of the West of England were present. The service was conducted by Revs. W. A. James, M.A., and R. Brooke Aspland, M.A., and the dedication sermon was preached by the Rev. James Martineau. The venerable M. Martin Paschoud, so well known for his efforts for the cause of religious liberty in France, was also present, and at the collation held after the service delivered a very interesting address. "The true doctrines," said he, "were pervading all societies, permeating and intruding themselves into all opinions—Unitarianism was everywhere to be found, and it was every now and then breaking out in varying form, and encouraging them by showing that its truth was working a wonderful influence upon society."

For nearly a year after the opening of the church the pulpit was supplied by many of our leading ministers. In October, 1865, the committee were fortunately able to secure the services of the Rev. W. H. Channing. His eloquent and impressive discourses attracted thoughtful if not very numerous congregations. His connection with the congregation terminated at the beginning of November, 1866, when the Rev. J. E. Carpenter, M.A., entered on his duties as pastor of the church. With the most thoughtful and considerate kindness did Mr. Channing welcome the young minister, assuring him of his sympathy and encouraging him in his work.

Since the opening of the church the congregation has slowly but steadily increased, and continues to unite in supporting the institution connected with the Lewin's Mead Chapel, the senior minister of which—the Rev. W. James—has wel-

comed with the heartiest kindness both the Rev. A. N. Blatchford, B.A. (inducted in September last as assistant minister of the Lewin's Mead Chapel), and the Rev. J. E. Carpenter. On Christmas Day and Good Friday the two congregations, alternately each in the other's house of God, unite for common worship, as they do throughout the year for common work, in the schools, Visiting Society, and Mission. May God's blessing rest upon their labours and make them the means of bringing to many the knowledge of God and of his Son.

GILBERT WAKEFIELD.

By Thomas Bowring.

The words of our Lord to his disciples—"Other men laboured and ye are entered into their labours"—have ever found abundant illustration in the history of His Church. Each successive age has been largely indebted to the one that has preceded it. The acknowledgment should be made, for much gratitude is due to those who have gone before us—who have fought the good fight on our behalf, and who have won for us an imperishable victory. Of such a true hero and a faithful defender of a pure scriptural faith was the excellent person whose name stands at the head of this article—honest, zealous, unflinching, ever ready to follow what he deemed truth—through evil and good report—and anxious only that he might not be found wanting to her interests at last. He suffered for her, he was ready to die for her, and from the ways of integrity he never was removed.

Gilbert Wakefield was born at Nottingham, A.D. 1756. His father was rector of the parish of St. Nicholas in that busy place, but not long after Gilbert's birth he was removed to the village of Kingston-on-Thames, at which place he died. The elder Wakefield was a man of great simplicity of character and of a placid benevolent disposition, attentive to the duties of a parish priest, but with no ambitious hankerings after the more splendid endowments of the hierarchy. His son has recorded some very amiable traits of this good man's character. Gilbert possessed an excellent memory, which was duly exercised in childhood, so that he could read the Greek Testament at an age when many boys cannot spell out a chapter in the English translation. He has left us an amusing account of his school-boy days and his various instructors, for some of whom he afterwards entertained little respect. Still he made rapid progress in his studies, and at the suitable age he was sent to Cambridge University, for which, we are informed, he was through life very grateful, Cambridge being then, as it had been for nearly a century previous, noted for liberality of sentiment. Paley, Watson, Tyrwhit, Jebb, were at Cambridge, and were Wakefield's contemporaries—he caught their love of freedom, and he was assuredly not behind any of them in its assertion and defence. Wakefield was two years at the University, and he left it with high reputation, having gained honours and a fellowship. But whilst there he became greatly dissatisfied with the creeds and articles of the English Church, nevertheless he subscribed the articles, an act for which his conscience almost immediately smote him. He ever after deeply lamented it, and in his very interesting and entertaining autobiography he says that he freely gives it up to the reprobation of his readers.

As a proof of his integrity he, soon after leaving Cambridge, refused to renew his subscription to qualify himself for the mastership of a grammar school. He, however, entered the Church as a curate, first at Stockport and then at Liverpool, and continued to officiate as such a little more than a year. The prevailing morality and the manners of the people of Liverpool at that time were not much to Mr. Wakefield's taste. The execrable pursuits of slave-trading and of privateering were then openly carried on without shame, and probably gloried in—which was the more vile of the two it is hard to say. They appear to have been equally abhorrent in the eyes of Wakefield, as, indeed, they must be to ours, but the public conscience was not the nawakened; sordid gain expiated these and kindred enormities. His increasing dislike to the Church creeds caused him to sever all connection with the establishment so far as official duties were required, though he did not at once formally leave her communion. His feelings were never cordially with the Dissenters, he never

preached in their pulpits, whilst he occasionally, though at very rare intervals, preached in the churches of his intimate friends. He was, it must be remembered, a University man, as such his attachment to collegiate institutions remained; he had a strong love for the "studious cloister's pale," and all his deeply cherished associations were with the hierarchy, whilst to even the more celebrated of the Dissenting body he was at this period scarcely known. The sacrifice was every way painful, but it was made at the altar of divine truth—it was in the cause of Christ; for Him he was ready to do and to suffer, that his heart might not reproach him as long as he lived.

Having recently married, he now took up his abode at Warrington, and for a few years was the classical tutor at the celebrated academy there—an office for which no man was better qualified. He had for his colleagues Aikin, Taylor, Priestley, Walker, and Enfield—the compiler of the once popular and still very pleasing school-book, "The Speaker"—the younger Dr. Aikin and his sister, Mrs. Barbauld, were also among the literary attractions of the place. But the Warrington academy did not long subsist, and, on its failure, Mr. Wakefield removed to a village near Nottingham, where he opened a boarding school, which did not prove successful. His secession from the Church operated to his disadvantage, his repugnance to dissenting practices did not conciliate those who might otherwise have been his friends. After repeated disappointments he settled down in 1790 at Hackney, where he was for a short time engaged in his old occupation of classical tutor at the recently established dissenting academy in that place. He, however, could not agree with the manager of the institution, and soon quitted it, devoting himself entirely to literary pursuits and the publication of several works of great value. From strong dislike, which he took no pains to conceal, to the manner of conducting worship in dissenting chapels, Mr. Wakefield abstained from public worship altogether, and gave his reasons in a tract written for the purpose, "in which," says one of his biographers, "he endeavours to show that this is a practice countenanced neither by reason nor revelation—neither by the precepts nor the example of Christ or his Apostles." Several replies were published, but the most elegant, serious, and convincing, was from the pen of Mrs. Barbauld. Her pamphlet, after being a long time out of print, was republished at Bristol by Dr. Carpenter, and his edition is probably now exhausted. Its re-appearance even now would do no mean service to the Christian world.

Though Mr. Wakefield had apparently retired from active public life, he was yet keenly alive to all that was passing around him, and he took a great interest in the theological and political contests of the day. He was a decided and zealous Unitarian, and no less a Christian Unitarian, defending with equal warmth the doctrine of the simple humanity of Christ and the divine origin of his religion. He was also an ardent lover of civil liberty, which he thought was endangered by the proceedings of the ruling powers in Church and State. It must be acknowledged that his zeal became wrath, and his language was to the last degree intemperate and irritating, but he sincerely thought he did well to be angry. Watson, the Bishop of Llandaff, himself an avowed Liberal in religion and politics, had in 1798 published a charge to his clergy which Wakefield thought far too courtly, and on which he very severely animadverted in a pamphlet hastily and incautiously written. Both his publisher and himself were vigorously dealt with on the occasion. The former being heavily fined, Mr. Wakefield promptly and honourably indemnifying him, whilst the writer was condemned to two years' imprisonment in Dorchester gaol, at a great distance from his home and friends. In the then temper of the Government, and also of the times, we cannot wonder that some notice should be taken of the pamphlet; but the sentence was much too harsh, but it was a reign of terror, even in England, and the dread of French principles and French excesses was extreme. We must make large allowances both for the governors and the governed.

But this unhappy imprisonment was in its effects fatal to Mr. Wakefield's health, and through that to his life. Beyond the close confinement, which must have been bitterly felt, it does not appear that the re-

straints imposed on him were very vigorous. Some complaints were made of overbearing conduct on the part of the visiting magistrates and the governor of the gaol, but, on the whole, he was well treated, his family and friends had reasonable liberty of access to him, and he had his books, with literary occupation, to enliven his solitude. Some thirty years since a then elderly minister told the writer of this sketch that he had, whilst a student, walked from Exeter to Dorchester for the sole purpose of visiting Mr. Wakefield in his imprisonment. The recollection of the interview was, after nearly forty years, very pleasant to him. Wakefield's conduct whilst in confinement did the utmost credit to his heart's benevolence. He obtained leave to see some convicts under sentence of death, and his exhortations and prayers seem to have made the wished for impression on them; he purchased little comforts for some of the poorer debtors, and, though his views on public worship remained unaltered, yet, for the sake of example to the more ignorant of the prisoners, he not seldom joined in the services of the prison chapel. The hour of his deliverance, long and anxiously waited for, at length came, and he hastened back with his family to the beloved home at Hackney. Here it was fondly hoped that freedom and tranquillity, with the affectionate respect of his friends, would restore his mind to cheerfulness, whilst many years of happiness would be yet in store for him; but it pleased God to ordain otherwise. Mr. Wakefield left his prison in the beginning of June, 1801; he died of fever at the end of the ensuing August, not having completed his forty-sixth year. He had planned several literary undertakings, but he was cut off in the prime of his life and in the full vigour of his mental faculties. His friends mourned long his loss, but they had nobly sought to sustain him under the persecution—as he and they deemed it—which he suffered. Five thousand pounds were subscribed for his benefit, and to this sum many persons who were greatly opposed to his religious and political sentiments contributed. He was a devout Christian, a man of the strictest integrity, of unblemished purity, and of the most benevolent disposition.

BRIEF DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS.

If orthodox Christians are not to be punished for their sins, then they are not accountable, rewardable, nor punishable—then, what becomes of the declarations of the Bible—"God will render to every man according to his deeds." (Roman, ii. 6.) "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." Do not the Calvinistic "elect" go to heaven unpunished for their sins? Do they not teach that forgiveness is a remission of justly deserved punishment?

Sinners are not saved for doing right—but saving a sinner is influencing him to repent and do right.

A good life does not merit or procure salvation; but being saved produces a pure, good life.

All sinners were given by the Father to the Son, in the covenant of grace, to be saved by him, from their sins, hence all will be finally saved.

All men are lost in sin and error. Christ came to save the lost. None that Christ died for will be eternally lost; but the Bible teaches that Christ died for all. Hence, none will be eternally lost.

Of the prodigal son in the parable it is said, "For thy brother was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." The "lost" then may be found and saved; and all the lost may be afterwards found and saved.

Every sinner will be punished as long as he sins; but when he repents of his sins and becomes righteous, he does not need to be punished any more, or any longer. The object of punishment is answered in his obedience to the law. His past sins are forgiven or overlooked.

Some one has said that, if none are eternally lost, then "the threats in the Bible must be false, a mere sham or scarecrow." This does not follow. We aver that all the declarations of punishment in the Bible are true, and will be fulfilled according to their true intent and meaning; but an endless or unending punishment is not threatened in the Bible, when its language is correctly translated and understood. A declaration in the civil law of the Jews says, "The servant or slave shall serve his master *forever*." The word forever is here limited by the life of the servant. It is said, however, that

where this term relates to mortality, it is bounded by mortality, of course; but when it is applied to punishment in the immortal state, it signifies unending duration. We know of no passage of Scripture where the world translated everlasting, &c., is specifically applied to punishment in the immortal, or the final resurrection state. There is no proof that Matt. xxv. 46, 2, Thess. i. 8, 9, and other similar passages, pertain to the immortal state. Such an application has been asserted and taken for granted times without number, but it has never been proved.

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, even if it be interpreted literally, only proves the existence of misery in *hades, i.e.*, between death and the resurrection—not after the resurrection. *Hades* is to be destroyed ; and there is no account in the Bible of any hell, sin, or misery after the end of Christ's reign, as taught in 1 Cor. xv. 22—28. *Gehenna* signifies temporal destruction in this world; but there is neither any *gehenna* nor *hades* after the end, as mentioned in 1 Cor. xv. 24. The lake of fire of the second death, mentioned in Revelations, is not subsequent to the end of Christ's mediatorial reign.

Revelation xx. 11, 13, does not say anything about the resurrection of any. At the commencement of Christ's reign all moral intelligence on the earth, in the sea, and in *hades*, were given up into the hands of Christ to be judged, rewarded, and saved. "The lake of fire" is not in the resurrection state. It is a figure, signifying the destruction of whatever is cast into it.

All divine punishment and all afflictions are disciplinary or corrective, as well as exemplary. No sinner is ever saved from any punishment which he deserves or needs for his correction, reformation, restraint, or improvement. Divine forgiveness is not a remission of deserved punishment or chastisement, but the non-remembrance of our sins against us.

Salvation is the deliverance of the soul —not from justice—but from its lost, diseased, evil state of sin, error, and unbelief, into a state of knowledge, belief, obedience, holiness of heart, life, and spiritual enjoyment.

Belief, repentance, faith, regeneration, are parts of the process or work of saving the soul of man from its low, degraded, evil state.

Neither punishment for sin, nor afflictions, are God's principal or highest means in the work of saving sinners. They are only subordinate means, while his Holy Spirit, Truth, Love, and the manifestations of his Grace, constitute the direct, positive agencies in the work of purifying, sanctifying, and elevating moral intelligence to a state of holiness and happiness. "He will draw all men unto himself."

"Nearer to thee, my God,
Nearer to thee."

Christian Repository.

DROP A KIND WORD.

"I HAVE NO MOTHER LIKE THE REST."

THE weather had been unusually mild for two or three days before Christmas, so that the ice of the big pond was rotten, but Harry thought he could brave it; it would be a pity not to enjoy the fun now with so many admiring eyes fixed upon him! He made a bold dash—his little figure, upright and graceful, was balanced upon the ice. Then there was a crash. The ice gave way, and with a loud cry Harry disappeared beneath it. The group at the window seemed for a moment paralysed with horror. Then several voices exclaimed,—

"He's under the water !—father, father, Harry's under the ice!"

Every particle of colour had gone from Farmer May's face. He trembled and threw up his hands wildly. "O help !" he cried. "My boy, my boy! and I can't swim !"

"But I can!" shouted a voice. "I can swim, and I'll save him!" and dashing past the weeping mother, Joseph Craig, an orphan boy, plunged into the freezing water.

How they watched him, breathless and excited; how they shuddered when they saw him grasp once, twice, at a dark object under the water, and then rise, his face gashed and bleeding from contact with the ugly ice corners. He was some way out, but, breasting the ice, he swam slowly and with difficulty to the bank, with one arm holding up poor Harry.

"Thank God!" cried the happy parent, folding him in his arms. They bore him to the roaring fire in the sitting-room, and rubbed him until he opened his eyes. Very soon he was able to sit up.

And where was Joseph? Sitting on the kitchen floor squeezing his wet clothes and rubbing the great painful gashes in his arms and face, from which the blood was still streaming.

"Joseph!" It was Farmer May's voice, unusually soft and tender.

Before he was aware the poor apprentice lad felt a strong arm round him, and in a moment found himself sitting beside Harry, with great tears rolling down the grateful boy's cheeks.

"If there's anything you wish for now, Joseph," said the farmer, "anything you'd like to have, just name it, my boy. You have saved us many a year of sorrow, and given us cause to remember this Christmas before all others."

Twice Joseph tried to gulp down the sobs rising in his throat; sobs of joy they were.

"ONLY BE KIND TO ME, SIR," he said at length, "ONLY DROP A KIND WORD NOW AND THEN, FOR I HAN'T ANY MOTHER, LIKE THE REST."

How was it with Farmer May? He felt at once what great lack there had been in his otherwise kindly heart. It quite broke him down, that appeal to his better nature; so he bowed his head upon his hands and cried like a child.

Joseph sat as if in a dream. His beautiful Christmas had come at last. No more hunger and thirsting of spirit now. How the joyous red sparks of fire-light ran up the white walls, the whole room shining? Harry pressed him tightly with one arm, and Tiny, her cheeks flushed with crying, thrust her pretty doll into his lap, whispering, "There, there, keep it Joseph; I don't want it, indeed I don't," and then ran away into the corner, her face turned to the wall, lest by a look back she might repent the immense sacrifice.

Well, well, tears cannot always last, and very soon the May family were bright and smiling again, Joseph the happiest of all. And when the Christmas dinner was set on, and all the friends were gathered about it, they made a place for Joe among the children.

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN WORSHIP?

IT is, says one, the worship of God, the Father, "in spirit and in truth."

It is, says another, the worship of three persons in the one God.

And a third affirms that it is the worship of Jesus Christ as the only true God.

Now, to worship God is to present to Him the adoration and trust, the gratitude and love of the mind and the heart, the Spirit and the understanding; and, consequently, this worship is a spiritual principle that can in nowise be dependent on any verbal designation of the Deity that the worshipper may employ.

Words are not worship, nor is phraseology the essential principle of prayer and praise; but the language of adoring, grateful love and trust, whether expressed in silent communings with the Father in Heaven, or uttered through the voice, ascends by spiritual affinity to Heaven, and is accepted as the worship that Christ enjoins and the Father requires.

This, then, is Christian worship, and those who faithfully present it, in spoken or unspoken thoughts and feelings, are assured by Jesus that they are the true worshippers whom the Father seeks to worship Him.

They are not, however, by this assurance, exempt from liability to err in judgment, in modes of expression, and in doctrinal beliefs; but, as gold, however, blended with dross is still gold, with all its auriferous qualities unaltered, so Christian worship, whatever erroneous opinions and fallacious theologies may be commingled with it, is still Christian worship, with all its spiritual attributes unchanged. Rites and forms and ceremonies, school divinity, theological distinctions, and Church authority, are all powerless to change the nature of Christian worship, as they are to alter the attributes of God.

When the several votaries of different and opposing theories of Christianity breathe forth the adoring grateful love and trust of the Spirit and understanding in the various modes and forms of their prayer and praise, the vital principle of worship drops the conflicting phraseology and confusion of tongues upon the earth, and soars away in unfettered spirituality to Heaven, with one and the same worship

presented by each and by all to one and the same God and Father of all.

Hence it is manifest that doctrinal differences would become incentives to charity and the unity of the spirit, if each one kept carefully in view the broad distinction between words and worship, phraseology and the essential principle of prayer and praise, and practically recognised the fundamental fact, that Christian worship is a spiritual principle nurtured in the individual mind and heart, and personally presented to Him who is the Giver of every Good, the Father of Mercies, and the God of Love.

HENRY CLARKE.

LAST HOURS OF MISS BREMER.

THAT (Christmas) night she dreamed, as she told us the next morning, of hearing the most glorious music, such as she never heard in reality ; now of a certainty this music had been realised to her. She and I drove early to church for the Christmas matins, and she sang the hymn and "Halleluia" with full voice. She was delighted with the illumined church, but she took cold in coming out. She was taken ill on the second Christmas Day, but she made light of it ; she coughed and had a slight pain in her chest. The following day she seemed better. I drank tea with her in the saloon, and she conversed with her usual animation, eloquence, and cheerfulness. Next day she was much worse, and a physician was sent for. He pronounced her illness to be inflammation of the lungs, and wished her to keep to her bed ; but she remained up. Various remedies were applied, but without effect. She probably did not suffer much, but her strength was soon exhausted, and all hope was over. She was very cheerful, never complained, and conversed much. Yet there was an evident unrest about her, which greatly distressed us. We did all we could for her. "You make me so comfortable, my dear children, you make me so happy by your care !" On the fifth morning she took several turns round the saloon, leaning on my arm, and gazed from the windows on the beloved familiar scenes for the last time. Soon afterward she began to speak of death, and said that "she would like to remain a little longer, to finish the work she had begun." Later on, said she, "Now I am so tired, that if God were to call me, I am content." Afterward she said, as if speaking portions of inner thought, "God's light in nature ! There is something great in the voice of nature ! I have a sense of the Divine perfection—it is good—it is beautiful !" Directly afterward she took to her bed. The pain and weakness increased. She looked at us in the sweetest manner, called us by the tenderest names, and continually pressed our hands. Her brother-in-law and sister arrived at eight o'clock in the evening. She recognised them, and said with reference to us, "Those who surround me have been so good and thoughtful to me—so worthy !" It was a moment of inexpressible solemnity to us all ! About an hour later she become unconscious of the outer world ; uttered only broken sentences, as, "My soul is in the right place, but still there is combat." "The love of Christ is great, immensely great." Soon afterward the last strife commenced. At eleven she took some medicine, but at two she was unable to swallow. Certainly she suffered at times, but the end was easy. Two faint notes of the minor key were the last sounds from Tante Bremer's gentle lips. She had ceased to breathe. The moon, which had before been hidden by dark clouds, now came forth and cast its light on one of earth's noblest women, but in our hearts there remained a dark, impervious night, which no light could penetrate. We now again see light, otherwise we should have poorly comprehended the teachings of her beautiful life. At first the awfulness of death left its impression on her benign features, but an expression of peace was there as she rested in her coffin. She lay in her own chamber, which Therese and I decorated with creepers and flowers in pots. No snow had yet fallen, and we wove innumerable wreaths of green leaves and white everlastings, which we laid on the coffin. It was black, and on the plate, which was placed at the foot, were engraved the words : "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God !" — *Margaret Howitt.*

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

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Scientific Problem. — Dr. Whately once asked a company of scientists and scholars, why the white sheep ate so much more than the black? Some questioned the fact, but the Doctor assured them there was no mistake. A number of learned explanations were suggested, but finally the good doctor relieved the company by saying "the white sheep eat more because there are more of them."

An Experiment Worth Trying.—A good story is told of a Glasgow merchant who on his death-bed sent for a Free Church clergyman. Having some fears regarding his future prospects, he asks the rev. gentleman, "Do you think, if I were to leave £10,000 to the Free Kirk that my soul would be saved?" "Well," answered the cautious minister, "I couldn't just promise you that, but I think it's an experiment well worth trying."

Hopeful in France.—M. Etienne Coquerel has written an article in *Le Lein* on the Deity of Christ, in which he says this question has been fully discussed among French Protestants: "A small number of the Orthodox profess the ancient, but not Scriptural doctrine of the Trinity"—a doctrine according to which God is divided into three persons, who are all three gods, and who nevertheless make but one God.

Justice and Mercy.—The terrible saying of Anne of Austria to Richelieu holds true for mercy as well as for judgment:—"My lord cardinal, God does not pay at the end of every week, but at the last *He pays.*" God may put his faithful ones upon a long and faithful apprenticeship during which they learn much and receive little—food only, and "that in a measure"—often the bread and water of affliction. Yet at the last *He pays*, pays them into their hearts, pays them into their hands also. We may remember long seasons of faint yet honest endeavour; the prayers of a soul without strength; the sacrifices of an imperfectly subdued will, bound even with cords to the altar; we may remember such times or we may forget them, but their result is with us. Some of the good seed sown in tears is now shedding a heavenly fragrance within our lives, and some of it will blossom, perhaps bear fruit, over our graves.

Sanatoria for Drunkards.—Dr. Forbes Winslow, the best known of our doctors for the insane, published a letter in which he speaks of the painful condition to which some persons of cultivated minds and refined habits are reduced by their cravings for stimulants. It becomes so imperious that while they loathe the vice of drunkenness they deliberately give way to it, and no sense of decency, no feeling of propriety, no regard for family ties will restrain them. Such persons are, when under the influence of this passion, insane, but it is impossible to confine them to a lunatic asylum because ordinarily they are of sound mind. Dr. Winslow therefore suggests the establishment of sanatoria, where the craving would become a matter of medical treatment. Such institutions exist in America, and if established in this country patients would, Dr. Winslow thinks, voluntarily place themselves there.

Sound Philosophy. — According to the Leibnitzian system of optimism an infinite number of worlds are possible in the divine understanding; but, of all possible ones, God has chosen and formed the best. Each being is intended to attain the highest degree of happiness of which it is capable, and is to contribute, as a part, to the perfection of the whole. The existence of evil is no argument against this system, because metaphysical evil is merely a necessary imperfection in the nature of finite things, from which imperfection, physical evil (suffering) and moral evil (sin) necessarily proceed. Moral evil is founded in the freedom of finite spirits, which consists in choosing, according to grounds of preference, one among many physically possible actions; for although everything in the world is necessarily determined, still man, being ignorant of the future, must act from the convictions of his reason.

"We will do as we Please."—"We will do as we please." That was what some boys and girls said to a lady who told them not to go out in a boat which they were pushing into the water. They did what pleased them, and went off in the boat. They had a merry time *for a little while.* But the wind rose. They were carried out to sea, spent a whole night on the rough waters, and when they were picked up one of them was dead! That was what came of doing as they pleased. *We will do as we please.* Children love to have their own way. It *seems* right to them. But it is not right, nevertheless. Their way never brings them out right. It ends in sorrow or death. Children should learn that the *right* way is the best way. God made the right way, and it leads to happiness and to heaven.

Dissent in Wales.—In the year 1742 there were 110 Nonconformist churches in Wales, in the year 1816 the number had increased to 993. From that time there has been still more rapid progress. In 1861 there were 2927 churches of this character, and for the present year the number has risen to 3107.

Love.—With love the heart becomes a fair and fertile garden, glowing with sunshine and warm hues, and exhaling sweet odours; but without it it is a bleak desert covered with ashes.

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